

[10 August, 2000]

RAJYA SABHA

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) The discussions at the India-EU Summit held in Lisbon on June 28, 2000 allowed for a review of bilateral, regional and multilateral issues of mutual concern. It was agreed that India and the EU will forge a new partnership in the 21st century. The India-EU Summit Declaration provides a blueprint for upgrading the relationship to a qualitatively higher level. An Agenda for Action which encompasses joint initiatives in the political, commercial and economic fields was also agreed upon.

(b), (c), (f) and (g) Issues related to anti-dumping and anti-subsidy investigations in various sectors, including steel, were discussed. Both sides expressed the view that it is essential to raise the level of bilateral trade and investment to its full potential. The India-EU Summit Joint Declaration makes specific reference to the need to consult each other on anticipated regulatory and other measures affecting the flow of trade with a view to resolving problems at an early stage. The Declaration lays the basis for expanded economic and trade co-operation.

(d) and (e) India and the EU are committed to an increase in bilateral trade to its full potential.

Governments view on Clinton-Putin Agreement

2103. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item captioned "Clinton-Putin agree to destroy Plutonium, 2000", published in the Indian Express dated 5th June, 2000;

(b) if so, whether Government are also aware that the two leaders have failed to bridge the gap over Washington's proposal for a defence system to shield the two countries from missile attacks from third countries; and

(c) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government is not aware of a US proposal for a joint missile

defence system to protect the territories of the United States and the Russian Federation from missile attacks by third countries. However, Government have seen press reports regarding a proposal made by the Russian President for a joint US-Russia-Europe limited missile defence system, consistent with the bilateral 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty. This would be an alternative to the US plans for a National Missile Defence which Russia maintains are inconsistent with the ABM treaty, could threaten strategic stability, progress on arms control and trigger a new arms race.

(c) India has consistently opposed weaponisation of outer space, described in international treaty law as the common heritage of all mankind. Government believes that arms control treaties need to be implemented fully and in good faith to maintain stability. Unilateral actions perceived to be inconsistent with existing treaties may reduce the prospects for further nuclear disarmament, a goal to which India is firmly committed, weaken non-proliferation, constraints and encourage other nuclear weapon states to reconsider their strategic force modernization plans.

Breach of Dams Constructed by Chinese Authorities

2104. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that recent flash flood in Arunachal Pradesh is attributed to breach of a dams constructed by Chinese authorities in the upper stream of Brahmaputra;

(b) if so, the details of thereof and action taken in this direction; and

(c) the response received, if any, from the Chinese counterpart?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) to (c) Following the recent flash flood in Arunachal Pradesh in June, 2000, the matter was taken up with the Chinese Government. They conveyed that there was no dam on the Chinese side on the river Brahmaputra and attributed the occurrence of floods on the Indian side, to natural causes.